Rome April 5th 1864

My dear Tom

Yours of the 28th ult I have now the great pleasure to receive & cannot say how obliged I feel at your prompt kindness in getting for me the casts & sending them off - I enclose you an order for £7 on Mr F. B. Alston at the Foreign Office & regret that you should have to make trouble but I have no other way of sending money - Please to take the sum you have so kindly expended for me & remainder give to dear Maria with my love & assure that I hold her always in my dearest remembrance

As you touch rather seriously on my Venetian conclusions, this is again to assure that there nothing in it, save that I esteem this excellent Lady very highly & that we are dear friends & to me the good is great as it enables me to acquire elegance in writing & speaking Italian - Then my daughter Eleanor is delighted with her & my friends also. - She is a widow of great beauty & means, but by her husband will she would lose every thing if she were to marry - & even my heresy would put me out of the question - Meanwhile I am well satisfied with her friendship & don't care about the gossip which has married us many times - pray believe me that she is a woman of very fine character & standing - Now I regret to find that you are suffering from rheumatism & that your spring is not so early as mine - Rome is quite tranquil & I am very happy & proud my daughter is charming - Your loving Joe

P.S. I find that I can give you another half sheet without doubling the postage - You'll be all interested to learn that my dear daughter Eleanor is so well in health & looks & so well pleased with all I can do for her & that now Miss Emma Novello has come to live with us & so I am so lucky as to have a charming companion for my daughter - Indeed it was this concern about her that was the cause of my accepting the invitation of going to live in the Palace of the Venetian Countess who has a daughter & who offered to receive Eleanor & we were all three to keep house together - but this was so seriously attacked by my two daughters before they knew about it from me & also that the house was too small for me - That I gave it up - another reason that the air was not good - but the dear Lady

allow'd me "to back out" with so much
kind condescension, not always to pay any
thing for the many alterations done for me
that we have remained the dearest friends
ever since & Eleanor is enchanted with her
own regrets I did not go & live there as
she would have liked it so much — And
now my dear Tom I'll tell a bit of truth about
it for yourself — You see I have raised myself to so
high a position, that there are hundreds hungering
for my post my age would be against me were it
known & as I am blessed with health, spirits & looks
to disguise it, beyond what I ever had; 'tis likely
that I may cultivate the warm friendship this
distinguished Lady honours me with as it sets me
up in defiance of my foes, & they envy me on the
contrary that I could have inspired an affection
in such a handsome & distinguished Lady who has the
right of the Palace which bears her name — This
you will see has driven all my enemies off their
scent & now they attack the Lady on my
account — so I have "done" for them all — Now
mind this I tell you, that you may be at ease
that I have skill & cunning equal to any
thing — for I have defeated a "dead set at me"
& am now at ease — You'll enjoy all this — and
there is a Roman Noble jealous & even threatening me!!!

interest on the Papal National debt
it occurred to me that possibly this sum
might be excluded as no one had ever
claimed the interest & wonderful to say
my guess was right, for my petition to the
Pope in favor of Adams is graciously taken
up & I hope in due course the money
will be paid (£200) to the poor man - The
Finance Minister on the occasion presented
me with a large splendid silver medal
- This affair will be a great feather in my
cap with the F. O. — My Arthur is just
leaving me for London so now I shall be
all alone, but expect to go on to Torquay for the
baths, quite to my taste as I shall get good
repose in the mountain air which I need
but I assure you I am picking up in a very
respectable manner. — My love to all your
charming children & your excellent wife for
I should be even jealous of you had I not
gone thro' all the fiery (family) ordeal

Your loving brother
Joe